

Sewanhaka Central High School District

DISTRICT-WIDE HOMEWORK POLICY

The long-standing tradition in education of assigning homework has been given additional support in recent studies which identify characteristics of effective schools. Research clearly demonstrates that time spent on homework is positively related to achievement. Through homework, classroom instruction is reinforced, high expectations are supported, students are motivated toward self-direction, and the relationship of school and home in the learning process is strengthened. Homework is an important part of every student's instructional program.

Policy

Accordingly, every classroom teacher will require regularly assigned homework based upon classroom instruction no less than four times a week. Such action does not exclude long-term assignments. Principals will inform students and parents that a district-wide homework policy exists and that the grade for each marking period will be affected by the quality of the work. Parents should expect their children to receive homework and should see that it is done well and on time. The chairpersons, in conjunction with the teachers in the department, will develop a homework policy consistent with that of the district, and will file this policy with the Building Principal for his or her approval. The chairperson will check to see that appropriate homework assignments are given.

Purposes

In planning homework, emphasis should be placed on the value of the assignment. Homework may be assigned in order to

- ...strengthen basic skills
- ...reinforce study habits
- ...extending classroom learning
- ...develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction
- ...stimulate independent thinking
- ...increase range and scope of interests
- ...foster worthwhile use of leisure time
- ...preview or review classroom work

Special Considerations

- Teachers should take into consideration students' age, school experiences, physical disabilities, and instructional levels.
- Home assignments should be as carefully planned as any classroom activity.
- Individual or small-group assignments, varied to meet the needs of students, are often desirable.
- Reading assignments should be at students' independent reading level. Reading should be for both information and enjoyment.

To be effective in meeting these purposes, homework must be carefully planned in accordance with the following principles:

- The purpose of the assignment and its relation to what has been learned in the classroom must be clearly defined by the teacher and understood by the students.
- The teacher should plan and instruct students on what to do and how to do it.
- The assignment should grow out of classroom activities and projects.
- The teacher must consider the student's total daily homework load when deciding upon the length of any assignment. This guideline may require consultation among teachers.
- Students should be taught how to study. It is the teacher's responsibility to build upon techniques of study previously acquired.
- The teacher should respond to submitted work in a timely fashion.
- Whenever feasible the teacher will make corrections including spelling, sentence structure, and grammar, to encourage standard English usage.
- Because homework is an important part of the instructional program, failure to submit homework will be reflected in the student's grade.
- Review:
 - Practice in the basic skills of reading and mathematics.
 - Solving problems similar to those studied in class.
 - Preparing for tests.
 - Reading to parents from books already read in class.
- Development:
 - Using library or home reference books to gather information or class discussion.
 - Preparing a current-events report in social studies, science, or communications.
 - Summarizing a historical event, a story, or a science procedure.
 - Collecting or classifying materials.
 - Constructing a model or doing an experiment.
- Independent Study:
 - Preparing a science research project.
 - Organizing a bibliography to be shared with other students.
 - Reading additional books about a topic introduced in class.

Taking Textbooks Home

Homework assignments frequently require the use of textbooks. Accordingly, each school should make textbooks available for home use.

- Every student shall have available for home use every school day at least one textbook in one or more of the mandated school subjects: language arts, mathematics, science, social studies.

- The Sewanhaka Central High School District expects all students to maintain the textbooks issued to them in good condition, to return the books when requested, and to pay for them if they are damaged or lost.
- Students' responsibility for textbooks must be stressed as part of the educational program and by parents as part of the cooperative relationship between the home and the school. Respect for property should be encouraged with the child's first school experience and should include lessons in care and use of textbooks.

Responsibility of Parents

While the student should assume the major responsibility for completing the homework assignment, parents should be encouraged to take an active interest in homework by:

- Checking homework every day.
- Providing a definite time and suitable place for study or home activities.
- Making resource materials available.
- Checking the work for neatness.
- Arranging with the teacher for limited homework assignments when the student's medical condition necessitates it.